



General Assembly

Fifty-ninth session

First Committee

16th meeting

Monday, 25 October 2004, 3 p.m.

New York

Official Records

Chairman: Mr. De Alba

(Mexico)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda items 57 to 72 (continued)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman (spoke in Spanish): In order to take advantage of the presence of Ambassador José Nicolás Rivas of Colombia, this afternoon we shall begin with an informal discussion. We will then resume our formal meeting to hear introductions of draft resolutions on remaining agenda items. We shall then return to an informal format to take up matters related to the Committee's working methods.

I shall now suspend the formal part of our meeting.

The meeting was suspended at 3.10 p.m. and resumed at 3.55 p.m.

The Chairman (spoke in Spanish): I now give the floor to the representative of Myanmar to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.27/Rev.1.

Mr. Aye (Myanmar): I am taking the floor on behalf of Ambassador U Mya Than, the current President of the Conference on Disarmament, in order to introduce to the First Committee the report of the Conference on its work during the 2004 session and to introduce the corresponding draft resolution. Much as U Mya Than would have liked to follow the customary

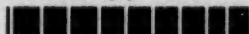
practice of introducing both documents himself, circumstances have compelled him to be in Geneva at this time.

The report of the Conference on Disarmament, which has been issued as document A/59/27, contains a factual summary of the Conference's work during the 2004 session. The report indicates, inter alia, that this year, new avenues have been pursued to revitalize the Conference on Disarmament. From the very beginning of the session, the successive Presidents, with the encouragement of all members of the Conference, initiated a series of consultations aimed at facilitating consensus on a programme of work that could consequently lead to the commencement of substantive work of the conference. Those consultations helped considerably in launching a series of informal plenary meetings on the issue of the Conference's agenda, on new and additional issues related to the agenda and on ways and means of facilitating agreement on a programme of work. Consequently, after many years of mainly procedural debates, the Conference became engaged in substantive discussions, which were generally recognized as useful and constructive.

The Conference also benefited considerably from the high-level segment of its debate, a period during which six Foreign Ministers and one Minister of State for Foreign Affairs addressed it in plenary meeting. All of those distinguished dignitaries expressed concerns over the stalemate in the Conference. However, at the same time, they also extended support to the Conference and reiterated its role as the single

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multilateral negotiating forum in the field of disarmament.

The Conference also considered possible ways of enhancing the engagement of civil society in its work. Following intensive consultations, the Conference adopted a decision to that effect, which is forward-looking and evolutive, and which opens new vistas for increasing interaction.

Despite those commendable developments, the Conference did not reach a necessary breakthrough which could have led to the establishment of subsidiary bodies on specific items on its agenda. However, as the report indicates, towards the end of the session, delegations shared a general feeling that the Conference should intensify its consultations and explore new possibilities with a view to reaching an agreement on a programme of work that would allow the substantive work to commence early in the 2005 session. In order to facilitate that task, the Conference requested the current President and the incoming President to conduct consultations during the intersessional period and, if possible, to make recommendations, taking into account all relevant proposals, including those submitted as documents of the Conference on Disarmament, views presented and discussions held. Moreover, the Conference also requested both current and incoming Presidents to endeavour to keep the Conference informed, as appropriate, of their consultations.

I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce the draft resolution on the report of the Conference on Disarmament, contained in document A/C.1/59/L.27/Rev.1. This draft resolution maintains, in general, the traditional structure of resolutions on the subject, which were adopted without a vote at previous sessions of the General Assembly. Needless to say, the draft resolution contains references to some new developments and to main achievements of the Conference during its 2004 session, including the decision on the enhanced engagement of civil society in the work of the Conference.

The draft resolution gives general guidance for setting the stage for the 2005 session. In particular, paragraph 4 welcomes the decision of the Conference to request both the current and incoming Presidents to conduct consultations during the intersessional period, and if possible, to make recommendations, taking into account all relevant proposals, as well as to endeavour

to keep the membership of the Conference informed, as appropriate, of their consultations. Moreover, Conference member States are requested to cooperate with the Presidents so that such joint efforts prepare the ground for the early commencement of the substantive work of the Conference at its next session.

I would like to extend my appreciation to all delegations for their trust in the Myanmar presidency and for the flexibility they demonstrated in order to reach agreement. A special word of appreciation goes also to the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, Mr. Enrique Roman-Morey, who rendered assistance in a most professional manner in this endeavour.

In introducing this draft resolution, Ambassador U Mya Than, in his capacity as President of the Conference on Disarmament, remains determined to continue to meet with the incoming President, Ambassador Christiaan Sanders of the Netherlands, and to engage in consultations involving all interested delegations with a view to reaching early consensus on the outstanding issues, thus helping the members of the Conference to commence substantive work at the beginning of the 2005 session.

The President of the Conference expresses his deep appreciation to all delegations for the cooperation and the spirit of flexibility they demonstrated during his entire tenure. He is of the view that the Conference on Disarmament still has the potential to fulfil its role as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum and that the draft resolution that is before us will provide a new stimulus to the commencement of the substantive work of the Conference.

Therefore, he recommends that the draft resolution contained in A/C.1/59/L.27/Rev.1 be adopted without a vote.

The Chairman (spoke in Spanish): I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.35.

Mr. Maandi (Algeria) (spoke in French): It is a great pleasure for me to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region", contained in document A/C.1/59/L.35, on behalf of the sponsors: Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, the former Yugoslav

Republic of Macedonia, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Zambia, Zimbabwe and my country, Algeria.

The regular introduction of draft resolutions on this item by the group of sponsors is eloquent testimony to the thinking that prevails among the majority of the countries of the region and to their commitment to making it a peaceful, stable and prosperous region. Our joint will to strengthen the Euro-Mediterranean area originates from — and finds its strength in — the many ties woven by history and by membership of a geographical area with strong, highly developed traditions of exchanges among peoples. The common destiny of the peoples of the region has made a Euro-Mediterranean dialogue important and necessary. This dialogue must continue to develop through increased joint initiatives to make the Mediterranean a sea of peace and cooperation. The 1995 Barcelona Conference on a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership recognized the special nature of Euro-Mediterranean relations and the need for collective action in order to eliminate misunderstandings and to reduce inequalities and imbalances in the Mediterranean region.

The draft resolution that the sponsors are submitting for consideration by the First Committee is similar to the previous session's resolution and deals with a broad range of matters linked to the strengthening of security and of Mediterranean cooperation. It emphasizes the indivisible character of security in the Mediterranean and recalls all the initiatives undertaken by the Mediterranean countries to strengthen peace, security and cooperation.

It reaffirms the responsibility of all States to contribute to the stability and prosperity of the Mediterranean region and their commitment to respecting the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations as well as the provisions of the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States.

The draft also emphasizes the fundamental principles according to which the efforts of the

countries of the Mediterranean are to be carried out to eliminate all causes of tension in the region and to peacefully resolve, on a lasting basis, all persistent problems of the region. It also emphasizes that the elimination of the economic and social disparities in levels of development and the promotion of mutual respect and greater understanding among cultures in the Mediterranean area will contribute to enhancing peace, security and cooperation among the countries of the region.

In the area of disarmament, the text calls on all States of the region that have not yet done so to adhere to all multilateral legal instruments related to the field of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation and calls on all States to promote confidence-building measures, openness and transparency.

All States of the Mediterranean are also encouraged further to strengthen their cooperation in fighting terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, taking into account the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, and in combating organized crime, illicit arms transfers and illicit drug production and trafficking, which pose a threat to peace and stability.

The sponsors remain confident that, as at previous sessions, with the valuable support of all the members of the Committee, the draft will be adopted without a vote.

Mr. Udedibia (Nigeria): On behalf of 100 sponsoring States, I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/59/L.4, entitled "United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services".

The United Nations programme of fellowships on disarmament was launched in 1979 as a follow-up to a decision of the General Assembly taken at its tenth special session, in 1978. The programme is aimed at promoting expertise in the field of disarmament among Member States, particularly in developing countries. The programme has succeeded in developing greater awareness of the importance and benefits of disarmament and to enhancing the knowledge and skills of fellows so that they can participate more effectively in arms control and disarmament deliberations and negotiations at all levels.

The Programme has trained 645 officials from 152 States since it was launched in 1979, many of whom hold positions of responsibility in the field of

disarmament within their own Governments and their Permanent Missions to the United Nations in Geneva, New York and Vienna. It is also gratifying to observe that a number of alumni of the fellowship programme are representatives of their Governments at this session of the First Committee. Special mention must be made of the Rapporteur of the Committee, who, as an alumnus of the programme, is already applying the skills acquired from such training only last year in the service of the Bureau and the Committee.

It is gratifying to note that the fellowship programme on disarmament was identified by the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services as the most successful United Nations training programme it had reviewed.

The draft resolution considers the decision of the General Assembly contained in paragraph 108 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted to disarmament, to establish a programme of fellowships on disarmament, as well as its decisions contained in annex IV to the Concluding Document of the twelfth special session of the General Assembly, the second special session devoted to disarmament, in which it was decided to continue the programme.

It also considers that the programme has continued to contribute significantly to developing better awareness of the importance and benefits of disarmament and a better understanding of the concerns of the international community in the field of disarmament and security, as well as to enhancing the knowledge and skills of fellows, allowing them to participate more effectively in the field of disarmament at all levels. We are pleased to have current fellows with us here observing our deliberations.

The draft resolution also notes that the programme has trained a large number of officials from Member States throughout its 26 years of existence, many of whom hold positions of responsibility in the field of disarmament within their own Governments, and recognizes the need for Member States to take into account gender equality when nominating candidates to the programme. It further considers that the forms of assistance available to Member States, in particular to developing countries, under the programme will enhance the capabilities of their officials to follow ongoing deliberations and negotiations on disarmament, both bilateral and multilateral.

In substantive terms, the draft resolution reaffirms the decisions of the General Assembly contained in annex IV to the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly and the report of the Secretary-General approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 33/71 E of 14 December 1978.

In the draft resolution, the General Assembly expresses its appreciation to all Member States and to organizations that have consistently supported the programme throughout the years, thereby contributing to its success, in particular to the Governments of Germany and Japan for the continuation of extensive and highly educative study visits for the participants in the programme, and to the Government of the United States of America for organizing a presentation for fellows in the area of disarmament.

It also expresses its appreciation to the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and the Monterey Institute of International Studies for having organized specific study programmes in the field of disarmament in their respective areas of competence, thereby contributing to the objectives of the programme.

Finally, the draft resolution commends the Secretary-General for the diligence with which the programme has continued to be carried out and requests him to continue to implement annually the Geneva-based programme within existing resources.

The draft resolution is essentially the same as the one submitted at the fifty-seventh session, when it was last considered. The draft resolution has always been adopted by consensus in the past. It is the wish of the sponsors that it be similarly adopted at this session.

Mr. Ahmad-Meza (Pakistan): I have asked for the floor to introduce Pakistan's draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/59/L.45/Rev.1, entitled "Confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context".

The maintenance of peace and security at the global level is in many ways contingent on stability at the regional and subregional levels. Instability at the regional and subregional contributes to the arms race and undermines efforts aimed at arms control and

disarmament. It obstructs the peaceful settlement of disputes, thus rendering their resolution even more difficult; it widens poverty and spreads despair and anger.

In submitting a similar draft resolution for the first time last year, the Pakistan delegation was guided by the universally acknowledged usefulness of confidence-building measures in many regions and subregions of the world, including South Asia. Pakistan remains convinced that the initiation of such confidence-building measures has rendered and can continue to render tangible peace dividends, avoid conflict, facilitate the peaceful settlement of disputes and allow States to devote their resources and energies to the socio-economic advancement of their peoples. Such an approach could also supplement arms control and disarmament efforts, since most threats to peace and security in the post-cold-war era arise among States located in the same region or subregion.

We have taken a careful look at the views expressed by Member States on this draft resolution and have also engaged constructively with delegations. Accordingly, draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.45/Rev.1 has been revised vis-à-vis last year's text. In its preambular part, it continues to reiterate the basic purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and to cite General Assembly and Security Council resolutions related to the prevention of armed conflict.

The draft resolution recognizes the need for peaceful dialogue to avert conflict. It welcomes the peace processes already initiated in various regions to resolve disputes through peaceful means, bilaterally or through mediation by third parties. It also recognizes that regions that have already developed confidence-building measures at the bilateral, subregional and regional levels in the political and military fields, including arms control and disarmament, have greatly improved the climate of peace and security in their regions and have contributed to the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of their people.

The operative part of the draft resolution calls upon Member States to refrain from the use or threat of use of force and reaffirms the Assembly's commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes under Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter.

In paragraph 3, a reference to the ways and means regarding confidence-building measures contained in the 1993 report of the United Nations Disarmament

Commission has been added to this year's revised draft resolution. The draft resolution calls upon Member States to pursue those ways and means through sustained consultations and dialogue. It urges strict compliance with bilateral, regional and international arms control and disarmament agreements to which the contending States are parties. It also urges that confidence-building measures should contribute to the objectives of strategic stability, encourages the promotion of bilateral and regional confidence-building measures to avoid conflict and prevent unintended and accidental outbreak of hostilities, and requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly containing the views of Member States on confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context.

My delegation hopes that the revised draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/59/L.45/Rev.1 will be adopted with the full consent of the Committee.

The Chairman (spoke in Spanish): I call on the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.6/Rev.1.

Mr. Baldi-Nejad (Islamic Republic of Iran): I have asked for the floor to introduce the newly revised text of the draft resolution, entitled "Missiles", contained in document A/C.1/59/L.6/Rev.1.

Following the submission of draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.6, we have had extensive consultations on the text. Various views were expressed on improving the text, which we considered in depth, particularly with respect to their implications on the whole process of addressing missiles in all their aspects within the United Nations. The discussions were concentrated in particular on paragraph 2, which requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report, with the support of qualified consultants and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, on areas where consensus can be reached, and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session. Some Member States were of the belief that, in preparing such a study, the views of Member States should be taken into account. Although, in our view, the original formulation implied that the views of Member States were required to be taken into account — since the study intends to concentrate on the areas of consensus among Member States — we felt that it would be clearer and stronger if such an element appeared in the language of paragraph 2 of the draft resolution.

In this newly revised text of the draft resolution, paragraph 2, therefore, begins as follows.

"Requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report, with the support of qualified consultants and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, as appropriate, taking into account the views expressed by Member States, to contribute to the United Nations endeavour ...".

We have merely inserted the phrase, "taking into account the views expressed by Member States". With that addition, we are happy to have reached a better understanding among the parties involved, and we hope that full support will be given to the revised draft resolution.

Mr. Hameed (Iraq) (spoke in Arabic): The delegation of the Republic of Iraq wishes, first of all, to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are convinced that, along with the other members of the Bureau, you will be able to guide our Committee's deliberations in a manner that will lead to success. It is an honour for me to speak in this forum on behalf of my country, Iraq.

I want to convey the image of a new Iraq, one which is interested in scientific research for peaceful purposes in the service of people and their societies. The international community has welcomed the creation of the Interim Iraqi Government, which in its political statements has committed itself to respecting all international conventions and treaties. The Interim Government has also confirmed Iraq's intention to participate effectively as observer in meetings of committees related to weapons treaties and conventions to which Iraq is not party. We are also voluntarily committed to respecting the provisions of such conventions until we become a full party to them.

The delegation of Iraq supports all efforts to achieve general and complete disarmament at the regional and subregional levels. In particular, we

support initiatives relating to guaranteeing full respect for disarmament treaties, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We emphasize the need to make the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone and an area free from weapons of mass destruction, in order that we may have a just peace in the region.

Many innocent Iraqi civilians have been the victims of terrorist attacks intended to sow panic and fear among the civilian population and to create a climate of anarchy and instability. Such acts are not in conformity with any divine law; for that reason, Iraq calls on the members of the First Committee to expedite the adoption of a draft resolution on measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring, developing or producing weapons of mass destruction and their delivery vehicles. We also emphasize the need for all States to comply with Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Iraq supports the convening of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. In that regard, I would like to express our support for draft resolution A/C.1/59/L.14, introduced by Malaysia on behalf of the States members of the Non-Aligned Movement. That draft resolution will make it possible for us to establish an agenda devoted to disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

The Chairman (spoke in Spanish): That concludes the second phase of the Committee's work. In accordance with the Committee's work and timetable, tomorrow we shall begin the third and final phase of our work, namely, action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under agenda items 57 to 72.

I now intend to adjourn the formal part of this meeting in order to utilize the remaining time to return informally to issues of improving the Committee's working methods and generally revitalizing its work.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.